

2009 BLM Exclusive Use Helicopter Managers Meeting

Big Picture Briefing: Brad Gibbs

- 2010 budget is unclear at this point. The new administration could provide financial opportunity. Facilities upgrades are a possibility; if you have needs, identify them and submit requests with local unit.
- 2009 budget based on current continuing resolution, which expires on March 14th. This may be extended, however, if a 2009 budget is enacted, there may be national funding available for hiring.
- No anticipated changes with BLM Exclusive Use aircraft; an additional type II is planned as need and budget allow.
- There are still 9 contracts to be awarded (part 27 aircraft across the board)

Nationalization/Standardization: Brad Gibbs

- Goal is to maintain or upgrade aircraft from a performance standpoint within budget constraints.
- Standardization principles may include: higher qualification standards relative to position, increased focus on training, and target staffing level of 15 for type II's and 10 for type III's. This staffing level target reflects the need to match crew numbers to aircraft size and performance and have effective seven day staffing.
- Increase national mobility of aircraft and crews through national office influence and decrease "resource hoarding."
- Explore options for line item funding where national funding is earmarked for Exclusive Use crews and goes straight to individual programs. The key is buy in from national and state level fire operations.
- Create a forum to collectively identify concerns and issues to address at the state level and ultimately advance upward to the national level, i.e. a chartered BLM Exclusive Use Helicopter Steering Committee.

DOI On-Call Small Helicopter Contract Review: Toni Musgrove

- Contract will be renewed next week, and expect updated pricing online in two or three weeks. (So be sure to check for updates if you have any projects coming up).
- A solid line in the margin of the contract indicates content that has changed from the previous contract.

- There has been some confusion as to whether the On-Call Small Helicopter Contract has replaced ARAs entirely; this is not the case. ARAs still exist, but they must meet two criterion: They must be less than \$25,000 and are not for fire use.
- Fire missions of more than one day duration must be hired on a daily availability and fixed flight rate basis (C17.4.2.1). Fire missions of only one day can be hired in the above manner, or on a project rate (C17.4.2.2).
- Contractor claims for compensation for damage from the government (C32) must be submitted on a separate claim; they cannot be a line item on a 23. Be sure to document any damage that may result in a potential claim thoroughly.

FS/BLM Helicopter Program Updates: Welbaum/Bitting

FS

- Current Exclusive use Contracts for 2009 including large fire support type I and type II and initial attack helicopters. Currently 34 host bases for large fire support EU helicopters on contract periods for one base year with three options. Base year will expire on April 30, 2009. All options will expire on April 30, 2012.
- Exclusive Use Initial Attack: 26 National IA helicopters. Once the final option is exercised it will be good through April 30, 2010.
- 7 Regional helicopters, also good through April 30, 2010 once the final option is exercised.
- Plan on combining all 33 IA ships and advertising one solicitation in the spring of 2009.
- Evaluate and award as early as October 1, 2009 for May 1, 2010 contract period
- Upcoming solicitations for EU contracts: 3 solicitations, 2 IA and 1 large fire support.
- Ten Contract Items have been terminated (both EU and CWN) through determination of cause. These contracts (5 standard category and 5 LFS) are currently being re-advertised. The ships were terminated for company issues, not mechanical issues. It was determined that equipped weights on these helicopters were inaccurate by an average of 500 lbs, and the company was using unapproved performance charts.
- RADS – Rope Assisted Delivery System: Big Hill (Eldorado NF CA) will be in the 4th and final season of field testing this year, and the method will be approved or abandoned by the end of this year .
- FS is advancing the concept of “doctrine,” which allows expanded authority for decision making in areas of ambiguous policy.

BLM

- NAP – National Aviation Plan updated version should be available in mid March, including cargo let down protocol and training requirements.
- 9400 manual is updated and online.
- DM revisions are still pending; OPMs have been re-issued under old authority, and will be revised and released with updated DM.

- 2009 fleet will be the same as 2008, no reduction is anticipated. 9 type II (4 Fairbanks, AK, Boise, ID, Twin Falls, ID, Burns, OR, Lakeview, OR, and Apple Valley, CA) and 14 type III.
- Type III target specs have been bumped to 970 lbs at 7,000' and 25c.
- Four bases will begin new cargo let down programs this year: Twin Falls, Ely, Toole, and Rawlins
- 406 megahertz ELTs required in Alaska, 121.5 still approved in lower 48. EPIRB, personal locator beacons meet the intent of the Alaska contracts as well (look at specific contract for precise language). Possible requirement for AK non-fire helicopters to go with 406 also?

Helibase Management Complexity Analysis: Bitting

- Bryan has developed a complexity analysis for helibase managers to both justify managing a helibase as an HEB2 that has more than 3 aircraft, or as a means to justify an HEB1.
- Possible modifications to this complexity analysis were collectively generated at the recent EU managers meeting. Brian will be emailing the revised version.
- Do we want to increase the current number of aircraft that defines HEB2 from 3 to 5?

Training.... IAT VS. Fire: Glen Claypool

- New S-372 should be available in April, 2009.
- NWCG recognizes that there is a lot of overlap in content with S-270, S-271, and IAT B3. New blended courses are being developed that combine online modules with classroom content to address this.
- IQCS and IAT interoperability is still an issue that is being worked on, however it is a slow process.
- IQCS qualifications and NWCG training are accepted by IAT. To determine which NWCG courses count for IAT credit, refer to the IAT website or the crosswalk in the National Aviation Plan.
- The mandatory online fire training for pilots that includes fire behavior, tactics, ICS, terminology, etc is on the IAT website. Managers are encouraged to review these modules.
- HECM refresher is a non issue. There is no refresher requirement, just need to maintain currency. RT-271 reference will be dropped from the Red Book and FSM 5700.
- Aviation Leadership Development Initiative is an opportunity available to GS-07 and GS-09 individuals who currently have aviation management responsibilities and an interest in a career in aviation management. The program aims to develop well-qualified candidates with the necessary skills to compete for aviation positions at the unit and state level. The NAO will coordinate and manage this initiative and provide funding for travel and per diem. For questions and further info contact Glen Claypool 208.387.5160.

Steering Committee: Bitting

- The need for a BLM Exclusive Use Helicopter Steering Committee was discussed and acted on at the EU managers meeting.

- A steering committee would enhance communication, identification of issues, and allow the BLM EU program to speak with one collective voice.
- The group elected Patrick Kenny, from Salt Lake, UT as the initial committee chair. Joe Rogan, from Boise, ID was elected as co-chair. Other representation was selected geographically, with Lisa Cardoza from Apple Valley, CA, Chad Johnson Rifle, CO, Justin Robinson, Vale, OR, and Wes Stark, Alaska Fire Service. Additionally, Bryan Bitting will determine a SAM to act as a liaison (this will be discussed at the NAO / SAM Meeting at the end of March).
- The co-chair moving into the chair position and identifying a new co-chair every two years, periodic conference calls, and meeting annually on a location rotation (possibly in conjunction with an annual EU managers meeting) were options discussed that may be identified in the charter.
- Brian Bitting will draft and email a charter for review.

Operation Guide: Joe Rogan

- No true operations guide is in place for aviation; engines, hotshots, smokejumpers all have ops guides. The IHOG is more general policy rather than a document that gives direction on crew management and standards.
- An operation guide would address many of the concepts with nationalization and standardization, such as staffing levels, minimum qualification requirements, etc.
- If an ops guide is created and bought off on by FOG, program managers battling resistant FMOs for support and funding may have more leverage.
- Guide should include both type II and type III helicopters, and all risk operations.
- Joe Rogan, along with Idaho SAM Steve Banks is currently developing an Idaho State Aviation Operations Guide, using the Interagency Hotshot Guide as a template.
- With the newly created steering committee, Joe will work with Patrick Kenny and Patrick will take the lead on developing a first draft national ops guide.

Cargo letdown: Bitting & Blain Moriarty, AMD

- NAO approval allows for internal cargo letdown operations only. External on a case by case basis.
- Initial approval will be based on need and limited to one field season. Subsequent conditional approval must be requested after the initial field season. Brian Bitting will send out a draft letter for this process for those bases that had cargo letdown operations last year.
- The NAO is working with IQCS to develop IQCS designators, such as HCLS for Helicopter Cargo Letdown Spotter, and HCCS for Helicopter Cargo Letdown Check Spotter. **There is no official IQCS designator at this time.**
- The current draft for cargo letdown protocol specifies only the superintendent, assistant and leads could qualify for cargo letdown. Brian Bitting will draft a waiver to be used on a case by case basis to assess senior fire fighters and other crewmember who meet all other requirements ability for cargo letdown. Waiver process will be outlined in the BLM Cargo Letdown Protocols.

Aerial Ignition Working Group Update: Darren Mathis

- IAIG has been updated including: Red Dragon PSD machine, Flash 21, as 2 part gelling agent, gunner's strap approval as secondary restraint device, T & T helitorch approval, helitorch contracted service, and updated MSDS and checklists.
- PSD and helitorch language has been generalized, which dictates the need for model-specific training.
- Premo Mark III and Red Dragon manual are available online. www.promofire.com/ and www.sei.ind.com/
- Premo now refers to spheres as "Fireballs," and SEI uses "Dragon Eggs." Dragon Eggs are smaller and orange and white in color.
- The Blue Dragon, which is a modified machine using components from the Mark III and the Red Dragon, is **not approved**.
- Only Spheres manufactured by Premo may be used in the Mark III. This may change in the near future pending MTDC approval for spheres manufactured by Vangaurd (Aerostat).
- With contracted helitorch services, the user unit provides the contract (Toni Musgrove), helicopter and helitorch manager, and a Project Aviation Safety Plan. The contractor must adhere to the IAIG, and provide written SOPs.
- Certification for PLDO is at the State or Regional level, or as established by agency.
- Lead instructor must be qualified as HMGB and PLDO and follow nationally approved lesson plans (www.aviation.blm.gov/library.htm).

System Safety: Joe Bates

- System Safety is a concept developed by the FAA to be implemented into all FAR Part 135 aviation operations, and is the direction industry is going. The FS bought into this and has been in the forefront of implementation with training, and site visits.
- The driving purpose is to enhance safety and reduce accidents.
- The Interagency System Safety Aviation Guide includes broad identification of common hazards for both fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft, with possible mitigation measures and is useful in briefings and PASP's
- Annual prioritization of hazards based on assessments and interagency safecom trending with focused attention and inclusion in pilot read files.
- Encourages comprehensive briefings to include pilot's perspective and input, and based on mission specific topics (above and beyond generic six minutes for safety type items).
- Aviation turn down protocol based on line operations turn down protocol to be included in the 2010 IRPG.

IHOG Updates: Cameron Dingman

- Latest edition should be out and available in cache soon. It will be **White with Blue lettering**.
- 110 of 200+ change proposals were accepted, and revision is based on the premise of reducing volume.
- There has still been some confusion on what constitutes a managed helispot relative to flight helmet requirements. Managed means helitack personnel are onsite. Helitack personnel can leave on the last load with crews in hard hats.
- 80 knot maximum speed for bucket work, or model specific Flight Manual limit, whichever is more restrictive.
- Parking tender outside the safety circle designated by ICS typing.
- Appendix D includes ABS instructions
- Appendix M includes K Max, Bell 407, L4, and 210 crash rescue diagrams.
- Cameron has been on the IHOG working group since 1998 and is looking for a replacement to represent the BLM.

Red Dragon: Ben Bobic, SEI

- “Dragon Eggs” coloration is now white and orange (used to be black and orange) for increased visibility.
- Has additional safety features and performance enhancements such as: battery backup, low water interlock, automatic jam detection and clearing, 7 speeds (25 – 175 spheres per minute), fewer purge spheres, sphere counting, and tether remote control.
- Cost is \$8,500.00 (not currently available through GSA) for the machine and \$215.00 per 1,000 spheres.
- Manual includes part numbers for local servicing.
- Ben Bobic, SEI. bbobic@sei-ind.com, (604) 946-3131 ext. 109

Tasking:

Bitting

- Send out AMD Contract Administration document (Nature and Purpose of Contract Administration)
- Create and disseminate draft BLM EU Helicopter Manager Steering Committee Charter.
- Send out draft Helibase Management Complexity Rating Matrix for review and comments.
- Forward to existing cargo letdown programs example of subsequent year reauthorization request. (Accomplished 3/10/09)
- Draft and disseminate BLM EU program fitness challenge based on program outlined in 2009 Redbook.
- Helibase directory sent out to each base for updates.

2009 Exclusive Use Managers Meeting Attendees

Name	Unit	Email	Phone
Wes Stark	Alaska Fire Service	wes_stark@blm.gov	(907) 356-5525
Cliff White	Las Vegas Interagency	cjwhite@fs.fed.us	(702) 279-7599
Cory Johnson	Arizona Strip	cory_johnson@blm.gov	(435) 680-1495
Chad Johnson	Rifle	chad_johnson@blm.gov	(970) 250-0076
Kurt McDonald	Twin Falls	kurt_mcdonald@blm.gov	(208) 735-6508
Scott Wangsgard	Twin Falls	Scott_wangsgard@blm.gov	(208) 735-6506
Justin Jager	Ely	JagerJustin@hotmail.com	(970) 215-0141
Lisa Cardoza	Apple Valley	Lisa_cardoza@ca.blm.gov	(760) 240-8531
Jeremiah Boyd	Burns	Jeremiah_boyd@blm.gov	(541) 573-4477
Jeremy Seng	Lewistown	Jeremy_seng@blm.gov	(406) 538-1064
Jason Keefe	Weaver Mnt	Jason_keefe@blm.gov	(928) 684-3260
Justin Robinson	Vale	Justin_robinson@blm.gov	(541) 473-6306
Jason Baldwin	Vale	Jason_baldwin@blm.gov	(541) 473-6205
Clark Hammond	Lakeview	clhammond@or.blm.gov	(541) 947-6183
Chad Bergren	Lakeview	kbergren@blm.gov	(541) 947-6183
Conan Donnelly	Rawlins	Conan_donnelly@blm.gov	(406) 233-2947
Virgil Arment	Miles City	Virgil_arment@blm.gov	(307) 320-5903
Joe Rogan	Boise	Joseph_rogan@blm.gov	(208) 334-1004
Ray Raddatz	Boise	Raymond_raddatz@blm.gov	(208) 334-1030
Ken Davis	Ravendale	Kenneth_davis@ca.blm.gov	(530) 249-3275
Mike Worthington	Moab (Did not attend)	Mike_worthington@blm.gov	(435) 259-1883
Patrick Kenny	Salt lake	pkenny@blm.gov	(801) 541-5637